NYUM...
ムニャ...
Nyum...
What is it, Tsumugi?
...Mommy was just here.
...
...
NRGH...
...

Oh.
It was a dream?

...Yeah.
She's always watching you, you know?
From the sky?
...
Did she come to see me in my dreams?

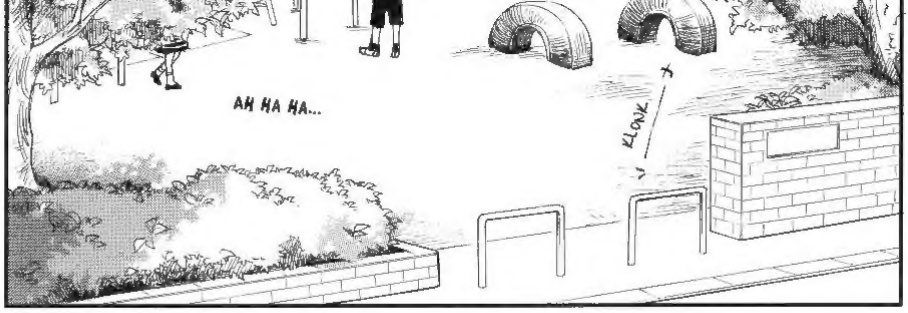
Maybe she's getting a little too old to believe that...
Mmm...
Uh-huh~...
I've been thinking... Sometimes Mommy's at our altar and sometimes she's in the sky... She must be really busy.
Uhh.
Where is she usually?

Chapter 24 | Liars and Parme-whatsit and Carbonara Spaghetti

Okay, we're heading to Triangle Park today!
Tsumugi-chan, are you okay?
Ack!
Oh, right. I'm supposed to hold hands!
SQUEEZE
Squish
Ooh...
Listen up..
Big kids, I want you to hold the little kids' hands tight.
SQUISH?

...
DRIP
Y-yeah...
...Tsumugi-chan's such a nice girl?
Oh, Sacchan, aren't you glad...
SWAP
...
SQUEEZE SQUEEZE
WIPE WIPE
I see, you got snot on you, huh?
HA HA!

The young kids' class are still babies, so they can't help it.
HEH.
But it's tough, because they're babies!
Don't laugh!
GRR...
That's right. The older kids are all big girls now.
That's true, you have a good role model.
Achoo!
Uh huh! I'm going to look after them, and take extra-good care of them!
I'm not sure that's quite the idea...
I'm a big girl...
...so I'm nice to the little girls.
Just like Kotori-chan!


AH HA HA...
KLONK

FLINCH

Raah!

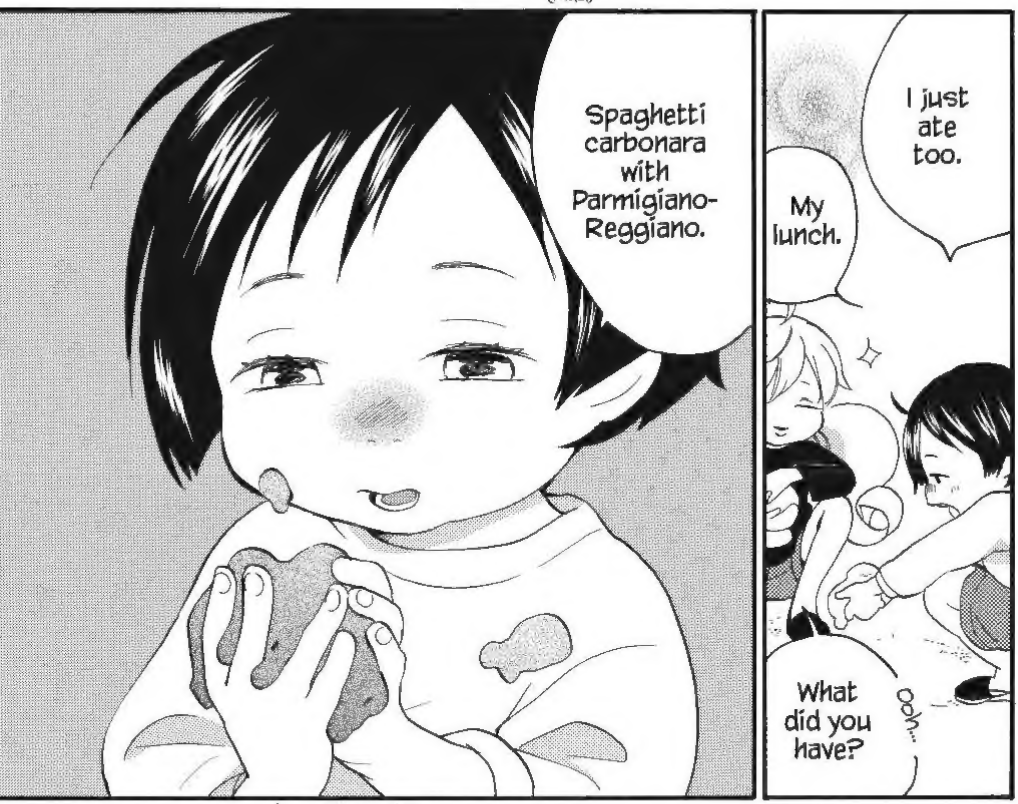
Mu...
You mean...
Big sis Tsumugi, right?
Mu-cha...

Is this a friend?
DASH
Mu-mu!
It's Mu-chan!

Hello, there!
Does your child go to Hoshiyama Preschool?
Oh.
Are you Sacchan's parents, by any chance?
My name's not Mu-chan.
Well, I guess it's okay.
I knew it!
Ooh!
That's right, that's right. All she ever does is talk about Mu-chan now.
We were just saying how great it is for her to have a big girl as a friend!
BLUSH
じわ…
Hey, come on!
Okay! I'm your big sis, after all. What do you want to play?
We're gonna gather all the sand...
...in the sandbox to-gether!
SIFT
SIFT
Even though it's already all together?
Oh, fine. Want me to show you how to make cool mud pies?
You can feed them to your daddy later.

So I'm good at making these too.
I always make food with Daddy, and we eat it together.
See, look!
SQUISH
SQUISH
You pretend to!
You eat mud?

(Mud)

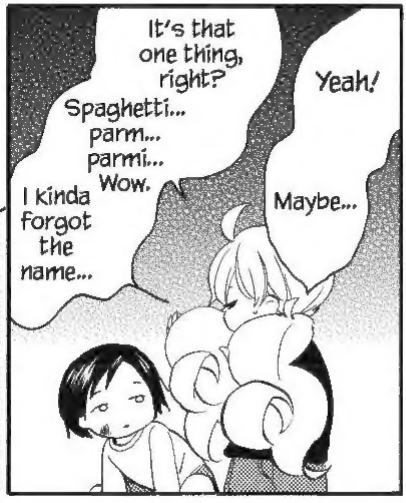

Spaghetti carbonara with Parmigiano-Reggiano.
I just ate too.
My lunch.
What did you have?
Ooh...

Oh..!
Yeah...
That...
You like it too, Mu-chan?

...Wha...?
Spaghetti carbonara with Parmigiano-Reggiano. You don't know it?

(Mud)

We both like the same thing!
HEE HEE!


It's that one thing, right?
Yeah!
Spaghetti... parm... parmi... Wow.
I kinda forgot the name...
Maybe...

Bye!

TWINGE
TWINGE

ズキッ
TWINGE
...
...Yeah.

Sign: Meat Sauce

I used the leftover hamburger we had to make some meatballs!
Okay, it's ready!
CLINK
コト
...It's the same as always.

SHAKE SHAKE
ブンブン
I like it the same as always!
Did you want something different?

Really?!
Hey, Tsumugi.
Want to try a different flavor next time?
But maybe she's getting tired of the store-bought sauce?
... Spaghetti's easy to make...
YUMMY YUMMY
うまうま

...
No!
That's not what I meant...
Uh...
Yup. There are a lot of different versions of spaghetti so you won't get bored of it!
WAAHHH!
いやぁ
!?
Why this all of a sudden?!
WAAAH!

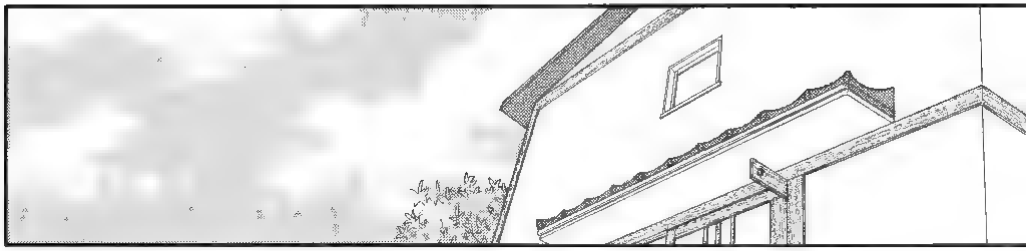
I need to eat the parm stuff...
The par... par... parm...
Pa? What about Pa?
I lied... I told a lie...
あ～
WAAH!
PLEASE!
DON'T LET ME BE A LIAR!
I am totally lost.
...Okay.
Sure...

I laughed too when I figured it out.
No...
Tsumugi's never had carbonara before.
I'm sorry for laughing.
It's so cute...
T-that's...
BWA HA!
Okay, the next time we meet up we'll make spaghetti carbonara, okay?
Thanks so much!
I--
I forget.
But I think I know how she feels.
The first time I lied, I couldn't sleep at all that night.
What did you lie about?

I'm stopping some place...
...on the way home!
I see you're not having any snacks today.
Sure.
Okay, I'll text you the date and time.
See you later!
That's right. That one girl is in her new class...
RUNTO
Ooh!
So the two of you know each other from the shopping arcade.
Now that they're second-year students, they're in the same class.
Yup. We've been friends since middle school, though.

Shinobu-chan, you were at that birth-day party, right?
For my niece's friend.
Uh... Oh, yeah.
I get along well with little kids.
The hwambwugers hwere swo goowd, right?
CHEW CHEW
もぐもぐ
Well, this is what she's like once you get to know her.
Hey, Inuzuka-sensei...
...is a regular at your family's restaurant, right?
Huh?
Yeah...
TELL ME MORE
Teacher...
...and student...
Isn't that kind of exciting?
So romantic!
No. No. Definitely not.
STOP IT.
It's nothing like that!

...
Sorry for yelling.
Oh...
No...
Oh!
Sorry. I won't go telling anybody...



I suggested she tell Sacchan that she lied first...
...but I guess she can't tell her until she's actually made it...
Wow...
Uh... yeah.
Thanks for coming!

TENSE
Thank you...
...for letting me come over!

It's like my stomach's filled with cloth, you know?
Oh...
Yeah—
Yeah, I know.
And it's got the words "guilt" written on it.
Yeah...
I see...
You okay?
I'm a big girl...
...so if I lie, I'm gonna say sorry.
But I want to tell her that I tried it...
...and thank her for telling me about it.
YEAH!
Okay! Then let's do our best so you can tell her it was yummy!

If you're just making a basic dinner, it's okay to use pre-grated parmesan cheese...
...but if we're not putting in any cream, why don't we...
I don't put in any cream, just cheese and eggs...
Huh? I don't really use a recipe.
I called Sacchan's mom to do some research, but...
...apparently she doesn't measure anything.
おぉぉ〜
WOOOW!
My mom brought it home from the TV station.
...splurge a little and grate this *BEEP!* yen per gram cheese!
Now let's cut up the lettuce and bacon!
It's okay to just chop the lettuce up into chunks!
とぎましょ!
SCRAPE SCRAPE
Add one part salt to 100 parts water.
While you grate the cheese, I'll boil the water.

Daddy, just once...
Just one time can you take your hand off?
Huh?
...
...Just once.
Put your hand right here...
...and take your time.
Slowly...
CHOP

You took your hand off, right?
Daddy!
Uwah!
Hey, that's dangerous.
...
ぱっ
SPIN

I'll do my best!
Oh, right!
Now it's Kotori-chan's turn!
Okay, now let's switch.
WHEW...
ほ...

Hee hee!
Ooh!
You're looking less tense as you're chopping things lately.
Yeah! You got way better!
Nice!
Cut the bacon into match-sticks...
CHOP
CHOP
...and then slowly fry the bacon on low heat.
Put a bit of olive oil into the frying pan...
I smell meat...
SHUK SHUK
ちゃっ ちゃっ
...and then add in the grated cheese.
We beat the egg...
SWISH
Once the water's boiling...
...we cook the pasta.
SIZZLE SIZZLE
Swirl the pan around a little as you simmer it until the sauce thickens.
Once the fat is rendered, add in some white wine.

This is the crucial stage!
...and turn off the burner.
SHLUFF
Once the pasta is done, strain it...
...and then add the cheese and egg you just mixed together...
...and stir really fast!
Like this ?!
Add the pasta into the ingredients in the frying pan...
SHLUFF
SIZZLE
D-Don't make me laugh right now! Where does she learn these words...?
HAH!
!?
Ooh!
Daddy's a gourmet chef!

Keep stirring!
TOSS
...while the leftover heat makes the sauce all gooey,~ so until then...
You need to make sure the egg doesn't clump up...
STIR
STIR
It's ready...
CHAK
It's carbo-nara!
Carbo-nara!
It sure is.
The real thing...
Yeah...
T-this...
...is parme...

Yeah!
Let's dig in!
CHAK
Oh!
Wait!
Let's eat!
One, two...
Do you have to go that far?
This picture's evidence!

...How is it?
SLURP
むちむち
SLURP
GULP
んんん!
DRIP

This is the taste I like!
Really...?!
Yummy!
はい、
AAH!

It's good!
I like the really heavy stuff made with cream too, but...
...just cheese and eggs makes the sauce really gooey.
I like this!
You sounded like a reporter just now.
On TV.
Huh? Huh?
"I like how it feels like a simple meal you could make for lunch."
I'd eat it for dinner, too!
You're right! This is good!
You could easily make it at home!
Use pre-grated cheese...
...and maybe broccoli and edamame instead of the lettuce...
They're getting cocky...
Yup!
Yup!
...

...so I'm not gonna lie any-more!
When you lie, your stomach gets all tight...

Does your stomach get tight when you lie, Kotori-chan?
What about you, Daddy?
You're a good girl, Tsumugi-chan!

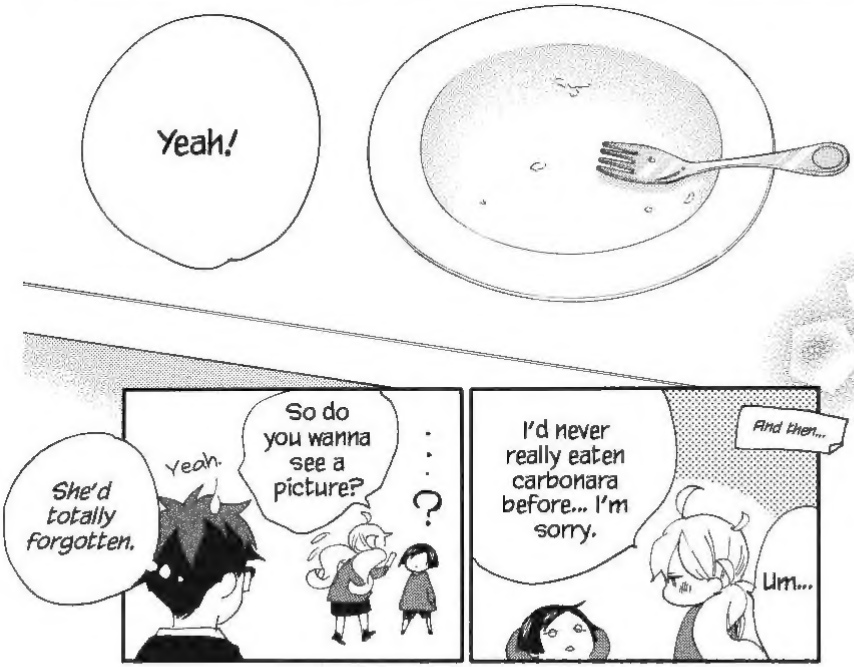
Maybe when I don't know the answer to something, I can't say that. So I say something different...
...maybe...
Oh, sorry! I really don't know.
...lie, maybe...
I...I...
...some-times...

I'm the same as Kotori-chan!
Me too, maybe!
What about you, Daddy?

...
もぐもぐ
CHEW CHEW
GULP
ごくん

I...
...

Even if I don't mean to lie...
...sometimes I'll say things I wish were true, even if I don't know that they are.
And then my stomach gets tight, yeah...
Yeah. Even for an adult, it's hard not to lie.
That's why...
You too, Daddy?
We're all the same!



To be continued...